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WEEKEND EDITION
FRIDAY, SATURDAY
& SUNDAY
APRIL 15-17, 2016

THE CHRONICLE-NEWS

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The Chronicle-News
TRINIDAD'S HOMETOWN
NEWSPAPER FOR MORE THAN
139 YEARS

50 CENTS
TRINIDAD
COLORADO

Vol. 140, No. 76

THE FINE PRINT

WEEKEND—APRIL 15-17

SPECIAL BROADCAST NOTICE
FRI. (9 p.m.) The DATELINE NEWS team will present a documentary on NBC about Walsenburg's Candelario murder case and the subsequent recent trial that took place and was filmed at the Las Animas County Courthouse in Trinidad.

9HEALTH FAIR
SAT. (7:30 a.m. -Noon) The Mt. San Rafael Hospital will host the annual event in the Hospital Lobby. Info: Lynda Pachelli, 719-846-8051.

OPEN HOUSE
SAT. (9 a.m.-2 p.m.) Grateful Dog will host this event with guest dog trainer Tina East at the Hollywood Bark facility, corner of Linden and Johnson. Info: Teresa Clark, 719-846-1100.

GUADALUPE SOCIETY
SUNDAY (1 p.m.) Potluck dinner and meeting will be held at Holy Family Hall. Info: Rose Mestas, 719-846-3647.

WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD
SAT. (11 a.m.-1 p.m.) PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF LOCATION: This HuLA sponsored celebration has been changed to the Trinidad High School Gym in lieu of Cimino Park due to possible inclement weather. Info: Jennifer Sanchez McDonald, 719-859-3949.

Today's Quote

"Marriage was made in heaven, but so was lightning and thunder."

~ Clint Eastwood

TUESDAY—APRIL 19

LAS ANIMAS COUNTY
TUES. (9 a.m.) Board of County Commissioners regular meeting is in the Las Animas Courthouse, 200 E. First St., Room 201. Information: 719-845-2568. COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Gary Hill (719-845-2595), Mack Loudon (719-845-2592), and Anthony Abeyta (719-846-9300).

SAMARITAN CLINIC
1st & 3rd TUES. (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) Here to serve the under-insured and non-insured community with free health care and low-cost lab work, 413 E. Frost and corner of Linden Ave. Info: 719-846-3536.

COMMUNITY FORUM
TUES. (3-6 p.m.) Interested citizens are invited to join in the strategic planning process sponsored by Economic Development at City Hall on Animas St. Info: Jonathan Taylor, 719-846-9843 x130.

HOLY TRINITY ACADEMY
TUESDAY (5:30 p.m.) School board meeting at the school, 613 Prospect St. Info: Jasper Butero, 719-846-4522.

CITY COUNCIL
TUES. (6 p.m.) Regular session will be held in Council Chambers, City Hall, 135 N. Animas St. Info: Audra Garrett, 719-846-9843. CITY COUNCIL: Mayor: Phil Rico and Council Members: Joe Bonato, Pat Fletcher, Carlos Lopez, Anthony Mattie, Michelle Miles, and Liz Torres.

PUBLIC SERVICE

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE
MON. - FRI. PLEASE NOTE that the office will be closed all week for training sessions. Info: Al Trujillo, 719-846-3940.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY
All free events. Info: 719-846-6841.
*EVERY SAT. (10 a.m.) Chess Club meets in the Community Room.

*RAG TIME (11 a.m.-Noon) 1ST & 3RD Fridays thru MAY 20
*TUESDAY TOTS (11 a.m.-Noon) 2ND & 4TH Tuesdays thru MAY 24

TSJC FEATURE FRIDAYS
FRIDAYS THRU APRIL 22 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) Featured Friday programs allow prospective students the opportunity to see what is available at TSJC, take a tour and ask questions, Berg Building, Room 201. Info: Greg Boyce, 719-846-5530.

9HEALTH FAIR
SAT. (7:30-Noon) The Mt. San Rafael Hospital will host the annual Fair in the Hospital Lobby. If you would like to secure a booth call 719-846-8051.

FREE LANDFILL DAY
APRIL 23 (7 a.m.-3 p.m.) The City Landfill will accept residential refuse without charge at 2401 N. State Street. Electronic waste is excluded. Tires will be assessed normal fee. Info: 719-846-2538.

RIVER CALL

Purgatoire River Call as of:
04/13/16. Chilli Ditch: Priority # 9 --- Appropriation date: 01/01/1863.

Trinidad Reservoir Accounting:
Release 43,72 AF
Inflow 63,21 AF -- 31.87 CFS
Evaporation 10,49 AF
Content 28,831 AF
Elevation 6,194.87
Precipitation 0

Down stream call: Highland Canal: 05/31/1866.



Eric John Monson / The Chronicle-News

The start of the Coda Signature team during their ribbon cutting ceremony earlier this year. The new Trinidad edible cannabis business made their official public launch this week. Coda owners and employees (L-to-R): Mark Grindeland, Elizabeth Cooke, Kelly Santistevan, Geoff Peterson, Maximillian Baez, Brien Sauchelli, Michael George, Tracy Roach, Lauren Gockley

EDIBLE INDUSTRY

Coda Signature off and running

Trinidad chocolate company starts to sell product, about to get national attention

Staff Report
The Chronicle-News

According to Coda Signature it's their aim to "elevate the experience of cannabis confection the way music and food elevate life."

Continued on Page 3 ...

STATE FUNDING

City gets DOLA grant for water, sewer infrastructure

Steve Block
The Chronicle-News

The City of Trinidad received a \$1.5 million contingent grant in Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), according to an April 4 DOLA press release.

The grant funds come from state severance tax proceeds, according to DOLA's Executive Director Irv Halter, and will be used for "Phase One" of the Trinidad Water and Sewer Infrastructure Improvements. The grant funds still await final DOLA approval before the funds become available.

The total project funds required for the Water and Sewer Infrastructure Improvements project amount to \$3,000,811.88, meaning

the city has to come up with a total cash match of \$1,500,811.88. Those matching funds come from the following sources: \$500,811.88 from Water Utility Reserves, \$500,000 from the Water Utility Budget and \$250,000 each from the 2016 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) budget and from CIP Reserves.

Those city funds are available through the act of not transferring them into the general fund, said the city. The project would involve the removal and replacement of 13,501 linear feet of water main and the slip lining of 26,743 linear feet of sewer main.

Work on the project is expected to begin in the spring of 2017 and to be concluded by the end of that year. It would encompass about 40

Continued on Page 5 ...



File photo / The Chronicle-News

POSSIBLE SEVERE WEATHER

Major storm could impact Colorado through Sunday

National Weather Service
Special The Chronicle-News

An evolving storm system currently across the Pacific Ocean will track through the Pacific Northwest and Great Basin. Forecast models are coming into much

better agreement with regard to the positioning and strength, with the center of the system around the Four-Corners by early Saturday morning.

First, an elevated risk for ex-

Continued on Page 2 ...

Exploring the San Luis Valley

Keller's Travels
Part 1 of 4 Parts



COLORADO TRAVELOGUE

Alamosa: Going to the beautiful center of southern Colorado

Tim Keller
Correspondent
The Chronicle-News

For the first time in my life, I turned west at Walsenburg. I've lived in and around Raton for 17 years. I've explored more than 40 states, driven as far north as Edmonton, Canada, and ridden buses south to Guatemala. But I'd never seen the San Luis Valley.

Photographs told me that I was miss-

ing something. They were right: The San Luis Valley is vast and beautiful, with much to see and do. Why do we explore distant attractions but neglect so many attractions so close to home?

The beauty starts immediately, too, as Highway 160 climbs out of Walsenburg and passes the two lakes of Lathrop State Park—Colorado's first state park—and a smaller lake beside the Spanish Peaks

Continued on Page 7 ...

Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

Alamosa Home is a downtown furnishings business serving the San Luis Valley.

WEATHER WATCH

Friday: A 10 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after noon. Mostly sunny, with a high near 69. Breezy, with a south southwest wind 10 to 20 mph.

Night: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 38. Breezy, with a south southwest wind 10 to 20 mph.

Saturday: A 50 percent chance of rain and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 50. North wind 5 to 10 mph. **Night:** A 30 percent chance of rain or snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 32. North northwest wind around 10 mph.

Sunday: A 20 percent slight chance of snow or rain. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 49. North wind around 10 mph.

Night: A slight chance of rain or snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 30. **Monday:** A 10 percent chance of snow or rain. Partly sunny, with a high near 52. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph. **Night:** A slight chance of rain or snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 33.

Weather Sponsored by:

Inn & Suites
Wellness
Hotel
719-845-0102

Next Friday: Antonito to San Luis: Exploring Colorado's south central San Luis Valley. Still to come: Great Sand Dunes, Fort Garland, and Colorado Gators.



Exploring the San Luis Valley

... Continued from Page 1

COLORADO TRAVELOGUE

Alamosa: Going to the center of southern Colorado

Photos by Tim Keller / The Chronicle-News

From May to October, the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad runs a daily train east from Alamosa across the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to La Veta. The rest of the year, Alamosa's train yard is quiet, despite what the signage might say.

Inn that reflects the looming Spanish Peaks themselves. Stout new snow fencing lines the highway's north side as it approaches La Veta Pass, which stands 3000 feet higher in elevation than Walsenburg. Winding down into the San Luis Valley, the highway follows Sangre de Cristo Creek below on the left, and sometimes one can spot the old train tracks still used in summer months by the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad on its daily runs between Alamosa and La Veta.

Looming close on the right above the pass and the valley are four of Colorado's 58 "14ers"—mountains exceeding 14,000 feet in elevation. They stand so close together that one needs a map to tell them apart—Blanca Peak, Ellingwood Peak, Little Bear Peak and Mt. Lindsay.

Just 45 minutes from Walsenburg, the highway reaches the valley floor at Fort Garland, a small town of 400 people and a historic fort once commanded by Kit Carson. I'd been waiting for spring to stay at Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve.

When I learned that the only restaurant within 30 miles of the dunes doesn't open for the season until May 1, I decided instead to go stay in Alamosa and explore the broader San Luis Valley.

Over two nights and three days, I was able to explore and photograph Fort Garland, Great Sand Dunes, Colorado Gators, the lower San Luis Valley from Antonito to San Luis, and Alamosa itself.

Along the way, I photographed a herd of wild horses and Colorado's oldest church, town, grocery store, and acequia (the "People's Ditch"). I enjoyed several restaurants, photographed teenagers plummeting down steep dunes on skis, and got my ticket punched by an alligator named Stumpy. Even staying in one of Alamosa's best hotels, my three-day 500-mile round trip cost only \$360 for lodging, meals and drinks, gasoline and admission fees to



A bronze sculpture, labeled Frederick Remington, stands outside Alamosa City Hall.

Alamosa sits at the center of the valley, about 35 miles from the mountains on either side. It's a perfect hub for visitors exploring the valley's many attractions, with abundant hotels, restaurants and attractions of its own. With a population of 9500, it's a little bigger than Trinidad in both population and size.

Adams State University brings 3700 students to its impressive tree-lined campus of brick buildings almost a century old. Adjacent to Adams State on the north edge of downtown, TSJC's Valley Campus offers San Luis Valley commuters programs in nursing, auto mechanics, aquaculture, massage, business and law enforcement along with other college courses.

I've always liked college towns. Colleges bring young people, who in turn bring vitality along with bookstores, cafés and much more. Colleges are economic engines for small towns.

Alamosa's wide, bustling Main Street shuttles three lanes of one-way traffic northward through downtown, with parking at a premium on Saturday night. Sunday morning, though, Main Street was empty as I walked the streets with a camera to take advantage of the early morning's golden light.

Only Milagros Coffee House was open. Down a side street a man sat inside the window of Art's Barber Shop, presumably Art himself, perhaps taking advantage of the quiet to finish his tax preparations. Entering town Saturday, I'd spotted Amtrak trains a block west of Main Street and assumed that there must be an Amtrak route through Alamosa. Sunday morning I discovered, instead, that Alamosa's train yard, dating to 1878, houses a veritable museum of old train cars, a train buff's dream.

Despite signs warning of the dangers of train yards and one saying "Stop—Men at Work," the only person—the only motion—I encountered in an hour of exploring and photographing the train yard was a homeless man named Barry who offered suggestions on San Luis Valley's many tourist attractions and gladly accepted \$2 for a coffee at Milagros.

Just as Trinidad has an old train on display between Safeway and the Purgatoire River downtown, so Alamosa has an old Denver & Rio Grande train displayed outside its city hall along the wide Rio Grande River—which I have to admit being surprised to see that far north. A Frederick Remington statue of a soldier on horseback stands in the park by the D&RG train.

Across the street, the San Luis Valley Museum entices with 85 beautiful mini-murals in vivid colors arrayed along its east-facing wall. Some depict local landscapes including farm fields, the Rio Grande and the Great Sand Dunes. Historic scenes are supplemented with portraits of important settlers and citizens, including Kit Carson and world heavyweight boxing champion Jack Dempsey, who grew up in nearby Manassa.

These days, I'm purposely traveling without much advance planning. Going with the flow leads to delightful surprises. Unfortunately, it also leads to disappointments. I found the San Luis Valley Museum is

closed on Sundays and Mondays, the two days left to me. Had I only known that when I drove by it on Saturday.

Saturday night was prom night in Alamosa. I arrived after dark for dinner at San Luis Brewing Company where the only seat left was at the bar. I enjoyed the brewery's own Alamosa Amber ale with a burger, spending \$3 extra to get bison meat from the nearby Zapata Ranch. It was all good, but the restaurant's "brew fries" were amazing, the best fries I've ever tasted.

Walking past the jam-packed Bistro Rialto Italian res-



Along the empty Sunday morning streets of downtown Alamosa, a man took advantage of the quiet time inside his barber shop—perhaps to work on his taxes.

taurant on the way back to my car, I reached the busy Nestlé Toll House Café. That much chocolate in one place should be illegal. Unlike the smaller towns like Antonito and San Luis that each had multiple marijuana stores, I saw no marijuana stores in Alamosa. Perhaps a chocolate store is just compensation.

I like small local hotels but in Alamosa their rooms were too small and too close beside the noisy highway. Instead, I chose TripAdvisor's number-one-rated hotel, the Comfort Inn on the northern boundary of town, because it was the only hotel set far back from the highway. At \$100 per night, two nights accounted for well over half the total cost of my three-day trip, but it deserved its number-one rating and was perfectly quiet.

The hallways, though, had a bizarre touch: Lining the walls on alternate sides every ten feet were framed pictures, but each frame held exactly the same picture. Unlike Trinidad's La Quinta Inn that invested in a couple hundred Willard Loudon artworks, Alamosa's Comfort Inn bought dozens of nice frames all filled with the same image. I couldn't walk the hall without sensing myself in a scene from the Coen Brothers' film "Barton Fink."

At dawn the next morning I set off for the southern part of the San Luis Valley, where I'd cross four rivers in 40 miles and photograph a herd of 15 wild horses on a vast tract of unfenced public land. As always on this trip, the San Luis Valley was full of delightful surprises.

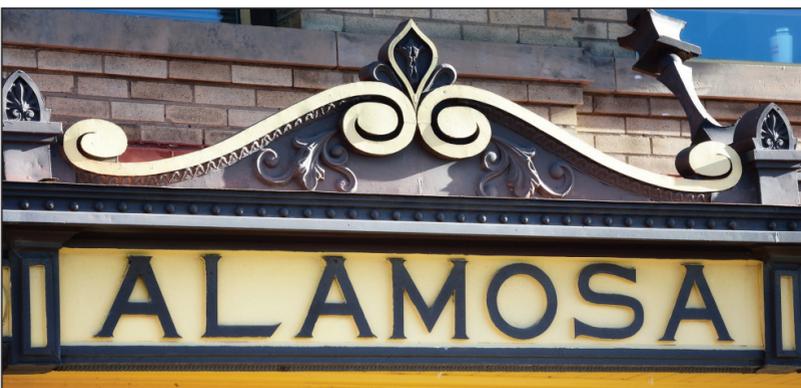


On Saturday night, Alamosa's Main Street was packed with cars and parking spaces were scarce; Sunday morning the streets were empty.

a variety of attractions.

Road maps tell a lot about topography. Zigzagging lines say mountains. Straight lines say long, flat open space. The San Luis Valley map has lots of straight lines. Bounded by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east and San Juan Mountains to the west, the valley is 120 miles long, from near Taos north to Saguache. It's high desert, above 7500 feet in elevation and underlain with shallow aquifers that have formed lakes, marshes and warm springs.

Much of the land has been cultivated for more than a century. Center-pivot irrigation taps the aquifers while countless streams bring bountiful supplies of water from the snowmelt of the mountains ringing the valley. Potatoes, head lettuce, and quinoa are principal crops, along with barley that supplies Coors and many microbreweries for the making of beer.



A bit bigger than Trinidad, Alamosa sits in the center of the 8000-square-mile San Luis Valley, its only town whose population is counted in the thousands. Established in 1878 when the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad built a large train yard, the train station is located one block off Main Street in the heart of Alamosa's downtown.

Read Tim's previous travelogue stories "Chasing Billy the Kid," "Exploring Bent's Fort" and "Going Up the River" — A first timer's experience of the Highway of the Legends that were first published in *The Chronicle-News* at the chronicle-news.com, or enjoy those and his other work and photography, at TimKellerArts.com.